Freedom

Vol. XXXV.—No. 388. OCTOBER, 1921. Monthly: Two Pence.

NOTES.

Unemployed Refuse to Starve.

The situation of the unemployed is going from bad to worse, but at last they are beginning to show the Government that they do not intend to starve whilst the rich roll in luxury, and unless something is done for them very soon they will do something for themselves. Sir George Paish, whose knowledge of the world-situation is probably greater than that of any other economist, is reported as saying: "So far as I can judge, we shall have twice as much unemployment this time next year as we have now, just as unemployment is twice as bad now as it was last year. No effective steps are being taken by the Governments." In our opinion, the task is now beyond the power of Governments, and the workers must tackle the job if they hope to save themselves and their families from starvation. The Government, even if willing, cannot do anything drastic to relieve the situation without antagonising the two most powerful forces in the country—the financial and landed interests. These two giants bar the way, and although Lloyd George denounced them in the days gone by, before he gained power, he has to dance to their tune now. It therefore remains for the workers to find a solution for themselves. It is a sheer waste of time to interview Lloyd George at Downing Street. They must ignore the Government and their own blind leaders, and get together and decide on methods for themselves. But whatever measures they may agree on to meet the immediate emergency, we know that there is only one thing that can prevent its recurrence, and that is to abolish the monopoly in land and use its wealth for the benefit of all. Anything less than that is merely palliative.

Is Labour Asleep?

The most extraordinary thing about the unemployment situation is the inactivity of the Labour movement as a whole. Here we have between two and three million men out of work, with all the privation and misery it means to them and their families, and organised Labour does absolutely nothing. The employed workers seem to think it is not their business but the business of the Government. They are likely to have a shock soon that will wake them out of their attitude. The Government and some of the big employers are manufacturing a nice little bombshell for them in the shape of further drastic cuts in wages. That is their great remedy for recovering the foreign trade that has gone astray. Recently a deputation of "experts" visited Lloyd George in Scotland to talk over matters quietly, and since their return one or two of them have been thinking aloud. Mr. Hichens, chairman of Cammell, Laird & Co., one of the experts, speaking on October 4 to the members of the London Iron and Steel Exchange, said: "It would be pure hypocrisy not to suggest that wages would have to be reduced, because wages were by far the biggest factor in the cost of everything. Reductions must be gradual. He did not think that wages should be cut down quickly, as that only dislocated the life of the worker." How considerate! Then comes Sir William Bull, M.P., who on the following day said: "I was at a meeting of the Cabinet Unemployment Committee yesterday, and some straight things were said about wages. I am afraid wages are bound to come down. We sympathise with the Trade Unions in their efforts to maintain a minimum wage, but——" So the plot is being hatched in Downing Street, and the Trade Unionist in work will soon find that the unemployed question concerns him very much. He will have the alternative offered him of reduced wages or joining the unemployed. The employers, with the help of the Government, are determined on big wage-cuts, and are prepared to throw many more thousands on the streets to gain their ends. It is a matter of life or death to them, and it will not be their funeral if they can help it.

Dr. Nansen's Vain Appeal.

Dr. Nansen's proposals for relief of the Russian famine were turned down by the Assembly of the League of Nations. His stirring appeal to the members on September 30 would have moved any one who had a spark of humanity in him, but those cold and polished Governmental representatives refused to advise that the necessary credits be granted. Dr. Nansen said:—

> "There was abundance of food in the world. Canada alone had three times as much as would be needed in Russia. In the United States wheat was rotting in the elevators because it could not be sold, and Argentina had so much maize that it was being used as fuel for locomotives to get rid of it. Ships were lying idle, and yet 20,000,000 to 30,000,000 were dying of starvation. The conditions were appalling, and what would they be when winter closed down over Russia? Would they allow the Arctic winds to silence for ever the voices now crying for food? Let those who have wives and children picture what would happen when winter came—a whole population wandering in search of food over a barren land, and men, women, and children dropping dead by thousands in the frozen snows of Russia. . . . . In the face of this situation you cannot sit still and answer with a cold heart that you are sorry but cannot help. . . . . From this place I appeal to the Governments, to the peoples of Europe, to the whole world, for their help. Hasten to act before it is too late to repent."

In spite of these moving words, the pharisaical members passed by on the other side. Some of the Governments hope, by starving the Russian peasants, to bring about the downfall of the Bolsheviks, and it is quite certain that the "Disarmament" Conference at Washington will discuss ways and means of forcing a "democratic" Government on Russia. Some people still regard a Government as a sort of beneficent deity, but there is nothing in all the world so inhuman—unless it is the League of Nations.

INTERNATIONAL ANARCHIST CONGRESS.

A meeting of London comrades was held at the "Workers' Friend" Club on Sunday, September 18, to discuss matters in connection with the above Congress. Letters were read from comrades in Glasgow, Gateshead, and Brighton, promising financial support towards the expenses of the delegate; and after some discussion the decision of the previous meeting to send one delegate only was confirmed, and our comrade, Dr. Salkind, Editor of the "Workers' Friend," was appointed. A collection towards the expenses realised £1 12s.

The following provisional agenda of the Congress has been sent us by our comrades of the Federation of Anarchist Communists of Germany:

1. Constitution of Congress.
2. Reports from the various delegates on the movement in other countries.
3. Anarchism and Organisation.
4. Anarchism and the peasant question.
5. The so-called Dictatorship of the Proletariat; authoritative and free (Anarchist) conceptions of Revolution.
6. Anarchist activity in Trade Unions.
7. Revival of the International Anarchist Bureau.

A meeting to discuss this agenda will be held in London, the date of which will be announced in next month's Freedom. Comrades outside of London are requested to discuss the agenda and send us their views and suggestions on the various subjects. We will be pleased to receive donations towards the delegate's expenses.

ANARCHISM VERSUS SOCIALISM.

By WM. C. OWEN

(Continued from last month.)

This pamphlet endeavours to explain the positions occupied respectively by Anarchism and Socialism in their efforts to interpret Life. It presents the Anarchist interpretation as based on the conception that the Individual is the natural fount of all activity, and that his claim to free and full development of all his powers is paramount. The Socialist interpretation, on the other hand, is presented as resting on the conception that the claim of the Collectivity is paramount, and that to its welfare, real or imagined, the Individual must and should subordinate himself.

On the correct interpretation of Life everything depends, and the question is as to which of these two conflicting interpretations is correct. Always and everywhere the entire social struggle hinges on that very point, and every one of us has his feet set, however unconsciously, in one or other of these camps. Some would sacrifice the Individual, and all minorities, to the supposed interests of the collective whole. Others are equally convinced that a wrong inflicted on one member poisons the whole body, and that only when it renders full justice to the Individual will society be once more on the road to health.

The dispute, therefore, between Anarchism and Socialism is precisely as to the point from which we should start and the direction in which we should move, since start and move we must. No one is satisfied with things as they are, and no one can be satisfied; for the existing system is a miserable compromise between Anarchism and Socialism with which neither can be content. On the one hand, the Individual is instructed to play for his own hand, however fatally the cards are stacked against him. On the other hand, he is adjured incessantly to sacrifice himself to the common weal. Special Privilege, when undisturbed, preaches always individual struggle; although it is Special Privilege that robs the ordinary individual of all his chances of success. Let Special Privilege be attacked, however, and it appeals forthwith to the Socialistic principle, declaring vehemently that the general interests of society must be protected at any cost. Such a hotch-potch of illogical opportunisms obviously has no solid foothold; cannot and should not last; is a mere transition stage through which, thanks to thoughtless indifference, we are passing all too slowly. The downfall of the present ruin, sooner or later, is inevitable. It is of the first importance, therefore, to clarify our minds as to the form of social structure that should succeed it. Between ignorant change and ignorant opposition to change we stand to-day in deadly peril.

In this pamphlet Anarchism is treated at the greater length for two reasons: First, because it is by far the less understood of the two philosophies; and, secondly, because a full analysis of the Anarchist position will be found to have cleared the way for a consideration of the claims of Socialism.

When a man says he is an Anarchist he puts on himself the most definite of labels. He announces that he is a "no rule" man. "Anarchy"—compounded of the Greek words "ana," without, and "arche," rule—gives in a nutshell the whole of his philosophy. His one conviction is that men must be free; that they must own themselves.

Anarchists do not propose to invade the individual rights of others, but they propose to resist, and do resist, to the best of their ability, all invasion by others. To order your own life, as a responsible individual, without invading the lives of others, is freedom; to invade and attempt to rule the lives of others is to constitute yourself an enslaver; to submit to invasion and rule imposed on you against your own will and judgment is to write yourself down a slave.

Essentially, therefore, Anarchism stands for the free, unrestricted development of each individual; for the giving to each equal opportunity of controlling and developing his own particular life. It insists on equal opportunity of development for all, regardless of colour, race, or class; on equal rights to whatever shall be found necessary to the proper maintenance and development of individual life; on a "square deal" for every human being, in the most literal sense of the term.

Moreover, it matters not to the Anarchist whether the rule imposed on him is benevolent or malicious. In either case it is an equal trespass on his right to govern his own life. In either case the imposed rule tends to weaken him, and he recognises that to be weak is to court oppression.

It was inevitable that all exercisers, or would-be exercisers, of power should condemn in the most unqualified terms a philosophy so fatal to their pretensions. As they consider that they themselves keep the entire social machinery in motion, it was entirely natural that they should think and say: "Why! 'No rule' will produce general disorder"—and that they should at once twist the meaning of this most exact word, giving it the sense of universal chaos. The masses are governed far more by ingenious misrepresentation than by club or bullet.

Anarchism used to be called Individualism, and under that title it was considered more than respectable, being, in fact, regarded as the special creed of culture. But the term was weak, because it did not define. People called themselves Individualists just as they called themselves Liberals, without understanding what "individualism" really implied, or the freedom inherent in the word "liberalism." So, from the exact Greek language the precise and unmistakeable word "Anarchy" was coined, as expressing beyond question the basic conviction that all rule of man by man is slavery.

The pages of the world's foremost teachers—its scientists, its philosophers, its poets and dramatists—swarm with passages emphasising the vital importance of liberty; the necessity of providing a favourable environment for each and every individual; the imperative demand for equality of opportunity for individual development; but in too many cases these writers fail to sum up the case and apply their principles to present conditions as Anarchists unhesitatingly sum them up and apply them.

The entire Anarchist movement is based on an unshakeable conviction that the time has come for men—not merely in the mass, but individually—to assert themselves and insist on the right to manage their own affairs without external interference; to insist on equal opportunities for self-development; to insist on a "square deal," unhampered by the intervention of self-asserted superiors.

"The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath." We propose henceforth to make our own institutions and to be their masters. We have come to manhood. As our brains now command Nature, it is high time that we should command ourselves. Naturally man is incomparably the most powerful of animals, able to bring into existence for himself all that is needed for a rich and ample life. But under the artificial conditions imposed on them by rulers, who portion out among themselves the means of life, millions of the powerful species known as "Man" are reduced to conditions of abject helplessness of which a starving timber-wolf would be ashamed. It is unspeakably disgusting to us, this helplessness of countless millions of our fellow creatures; we trace it directly to stupid, unnatural laws, by which the few plunder and rule over the many, and we propose to do our part in restoring to the race its natural strength, by abolishing the conditions that render it at present so pitiably weak.

Anarchists are convinced that the death-knell of slavery—of government of man by man—is ringing; that the chrysalis of slavish dependence is breaking, and that from it there is about to emerge the gorgeous butterfly of a free existence, in which each individual shall truly possess his or her own life, with all the infinite possibilities that life contains.

They hold that mankind has run, at last, the whole gamut of experience in government; tried it in every conceivable form, and found it invariably wanting.

For the last century, or more, we have been experimenting with the rule of democracy—the bludgeoning by governors whom majorities, drunk with power, impose on vanquished minorities. This last is probably the worst of all, for we stand to-day steeped to the lips in a universal corruption that is rotting every nation to the core. Is it not a fact that, whether it be a French Deputy or an English Member of Parliament, a Republican, a Democratic, or a Socialist candidate for office, each and every one of them sings exactly the same siren song: "Clothe *me* with power, and I will use it for *your* good"? It has been the song of every tyrant and despoiler since history began.

Why should you part with power, making yourselves impotent that a favoured few may be omnipotent? By so doing you destroy the splendid equality of Nature, which sends us all into the world equally naked, equipped with what would be, under natural conditions, practically equal possibilities of self-development? It is you yourselves, governed by the misrepresentations of superstition, and not daring to lift your heads and look life in the face, who substitute for that magnificent justice the hideously unjust inequalities with which society is sick well-nigh to death. Does not the experience of your daily life teach you that when, in any community, any one man is loaded with power it is always at the expense of many others, who are thereby rendered helpless? Do you not know that to be helpless means to be fleeced and flayed without mercy; to be hunted from land to land; to scour the farthermost corners of the earth in a heart-breaking search for the opportunity to make a living? We describe in a few words the life of the proletariat, the working man of to-day—that enormous class that has given away its natural powers and is paying such an awful penalty for this, the sin of sins, that Nature punishes most unmercifully.

We have no other conception than that, so long as men remain powerless, they will be robbed remorselessly, and that no pity will be shown; for the simple reason that the robber, the strong man, in his heart of hearts despises his victim for his weakness. We recognise that the sole remedy is for the weak to win back their natural position of power by abolishing the conditions of helplessness to which they have been reduced by artificial laws and unjust privileges.

The helplessness of the masses is not a subject for pity or milk-and-water charity, but for the strongest indignation that men should be so false to their destiny and such unspeakable traitors to their great mother, Nature, who, with infinite pains and through the evolution of countless ages, has raised them to a height at which they have infinite possibilities at command, which, in their cowardice, they spurn.

Let us not flatter ourselves that we can shirk this imperative call to self-assertion by appointing deputies to perform the task that properly belongs to us alone. Already it is clear to all who look facts in the face that the entire representative system, to which the workers so fatuously looked for deliverance, has resulted in a concentration of political power such as is almost without parallel in history.

Our representative system is farce incarnate. We take a number of men who have been making their living by some one pursuit—in most cases that of the law—and know nothing outside that pursuit, and we require them to legislate on the ten thousand and one problems to which a highly diversified and intricate industrial development has given rise. The net result is work for lawyers and places for office-holders, together with special privileges for shrewd financiers, who know well how to get clauses inserted in measures that seem innocence itself but are always fatal to the people's rights.

The political Socialists are never weary of telling the public that the present economic system has broken down, and in this they are profoundly correct; for when a system has reached a point at which it can no longer supply the most elementary needs of large masses of men, it is bankrupt. But it seems pathetically strange to us that these same Socialists cannot see that their criticism of the economic system applies with still greater force to the entire political, representative system, which, whether regarded from the standpoint of honesty or of efficiency, has become a stench in the nostrils of all intelligent and fair-minded persons.

In economic matters the Socialists see clearly enough that a complete change—a true revolution—is needed, but they still believe that things can be remedied by the election of a better set of deputies, although we have been labouring at that very thing for the last hundred years, and the situation has been growing steadily worse. Their great German leader, August Bebel, has told them in his celebrated book that "failure is ever the fate of the half and half." Indeed we think so.

Anarchism concentrates its attention on the individual, considering that only when absolute justice is done to him or her will it be possible to have a healthy and happy society. For society is merely the ordinary citizen multiplied indefinitely, and as long as the individuals of which it is composed are treated unjustly, it is impossible for the body at large to be healthy and happy. Anarchism, therefore, cannot tolerate the sacrifice of the individual to the supposed interests of the majority, or to any of those high-sounding catchwords (patriotism, the public welfare, and so forth) for the sake of which the individual—and always the weakest individual, the poor, helpless working man and woman—is murdered and mutilated to-day, as he has been for untold ages past.

Anarchism demands imperatively that full and complete justice shall be done to each and every individual; that there shall be accorded to all full and equal opportunities for the development, conduct, and enjoyment of their lives; and it declares, as an incontestable truth, that the first step toward this inevitable goal is the absolute overthrow of all those artificial and life-destroying privileges by which a favoured few are to-day permitted to gather into their hands unbounded wealth and power at the price of the impoverishment and slaughter of the masses.

Let no one delude you with the fable that we Anarchists are opposed to co-operation; that we wish to reduce mankind to conditions of primitive isolation. On the contrary, we see with perfect clearness that the favoured few, who have at their command the means of so doing, co-operate constantly on a larger and larger scale, as the improved methods of communication enable them more and more to make the world the scene of their operations. We understand that it is only necessary to shake off the shackles of poverty and helplessness in order to enable mankind, as a whole, to rise to a vast, true, voluntary co-operation, in which the entire earth and its fruits will be used in the fullest, wisest, and most economical way for the satisfaction of the wants of the men, women, and children born into it.

We are of the firmest opinion that the only goal worthy of consideration by clear-sighted and earnest men and women is the winning of such individual freedom as will render possible such a co-operation as we have just described.

We hold that the bold, straight, and direct way will be found infinitely the shortest, easiest, and most successful. We are convinced that if any other course is pursued, and it is sought by a series of make-shift compromises to pave the way for changes to be wrought out in a vague and distant future, it will be discovered finally that the time so spent has been wasted. Only by a direct attack on monopoly and special privilege; only by a courageous and unswerving insistence on the rights of the individual, whoever he may be; on his individual right to equality of opportunity, to an absolutely square deal, to a full and equal seat at the table of life, can this great social problem, with which the whole world now groans in agony, be solved.

In a word, the freedom of the individual, won by the abolition of special privileges and the securing to all of equal opportunities, is *the gateway through which we must pass to the higher civilisation that is already calling loudly to us.*

(To be continued.)

Mutual Toleration versus Dictatorship.

(*To the Editor of* FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—In the July issue of FREEDOM our comrade M. N. wrote an interesting article under the above heading, wherein he suggests that the time has come for mutual toleration between all existing schools of the revolutionary movement. The essence of his proposal is expressed in this sentence:—

> "*Co operation with all in the struggle against Capitalism—co existence with all anti capitalist parties on the basis of mutual toleration, non-interference, and friendly behaviour.*"

M. N. reminds us of the "avalanche of protestations" that met his effort in 1914 "to bring about an understanding between Individualist and Communist Anarchists," and therefore expects similar if not worse protestations against his latest proposal. While being able to understand and in full accord with his effort to unite Individualist Anarchists and Communist Anarchists, I cannot see any reason for supporting this proposal for "mutual toleration" between us and authoritarian Socialists.

Comrade M. N. knows and cites all the persecutions that our comrades are suffering at the hands of the most "revolutionary" Marxian Socialist State—in Russia. In face of such a situation, how can any one suggest mutual toleration between us and a Government that destroys communes, kills or imprisons our comrades, and suppresses our movement? One must, indeed, be a firm believer in Tolstoy's Christian attitude to come out with such a suggestion at this time.

But, granted for the moment that this proposal would be adopted by the forthcoming International Anarchist Congress, what is the proposal's chief aim? Comrade M. N. answers: "I venture to think that since friendly co-operation, or at least autonomous co-existence, with Socialists of other opinions would be the purpose, every grasping party would soon be found out and its aims frustrated; all would be driven by their own interest to show at their best and to do the best." Can one help but smile at this aim, when we know only too well how every critic of the "revolutionary" State in Russia is killed or jailed precisely for the reason that the Socialists refuse to allow the existence of such mutual tolerance? Our cry (if raised) would be only equivalent to a "cry in the wilderness." Apart from this, my main objection is that every capitalist State, since States began to function, has always oppressed the opposition, because of its fear of being "found out." Exactly the same attitude and action we expected and witness from the reformist Socialist State in Germany and the ultra-"revolutionary" Socialist State in Russia. It could not be otherwise. A State remains a State and will never tolerate any movement that could serve as an example in helping to bring about its own destruction.

The adoption of such a mutual toleration proposal by the International Anarchist Congress may help in challenging the sincerity of the Socialists. At the same time, the Congress would act in a compromising manner, by expecting any State to tolerate movements and institutions that endanger their existence. We never made such proposals to capitalist States, and there is no reason why we should make any to Socialist States.—Yours fraternally, FRED S GRAHAM.

FREEDOM.
A Journal of Anarchist Communism.

Monthly, Twopence; post-free, 3d. Annual Subscription, 3s. post-free.
U.S.A. and Canada, $1.00. France and the Continent, 2s. 6d.
Wholesale price, 1s. 6d. per dozen (13) post-free in the United Kingdom.

All communications, exchanges, etc., to be addressed to
Freedom Press, 127 Ossulston St., London, N.W.1.

The Editors are not necessarily in agreement with signed articles.

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We Must Produce Our Own Food.

Every one must realise by this time that the capitalist machine has broken down and is now proving itself incapable of providing for the needs of the people. In every country in the world where the capitalists control the means of production the workers are suffering the pangs of hunger. In the United States, Canada, New Zealand, France, Italy, and here at home many millions of workers are unemployed and faced with starvation, which is only staved off for the time being by the few shillings a week which they receive as unemployment benefit. Even this is exhausted in many instances. Although our rulers were warned many months ago that a world-wide wave of trade depression was certain to come, nothing has been done so far to meet the situation, and many workers now find themselves and their dependents at the beginning of winter without any prospect of getting even the barest necessities. Is it any wonder that they are beginning to kick? Did our rulers expect that these men would stay at home quietly and starve to death? During the war when Lloyd George was drawing fanciful pictures of the glorious land fit for heroes, he advised the workers to be audacious in their plans for rebuilding the world; but now they are demanding that he should translate his promises into deeds he pleads the poverty of the State and turns away.

Few people seem to realise the gravity of the economic position. The schemes of relief put forward by the Government and the Labour Party are temporary schemes only, and are typical of the hand-to-mouth policies so beloved by politicians of all parties. But, as we have said so often this year, the collapse of the foreign trade of this country is more than a temporary affair, and will last for several years. No one who studies the situation in Europe at the present day would dare to say that the markets there will be able to increase their orders for goods to any appreciable extent for some years to come. With the exception of Germany, which may also break down at any moment, few of the countries of Europe are producing anything which they could exchange for our manufactures, and those that could find themselves handicapped by the fall in the exchange.

Therefore we say again, if the workers are to save themselves from starvation, the food they require must be produced at home. By proper cultivation of the land of this country, and by using all the land suitable for cultivation, sufficient food could be grown to provide for all. The deer forests and the game preserves of the hard-faced men who made fortunes out of the war must be cleared, and cornfields made to flourish where now only the pheasant and the deer are allowed to roam. The pleasures of the rich must give way before the necessities of the people.

All this, however, we shall be told, implies a revolution, as the possessing classes will fight tooth and nail to maintain their privileges. Certainly it implies a revolution—a revolution in our manner of looking at the social question. It means that we must give up looking at the matter from the capitalists' point of view, and simply consider it as a question of providing food for the people. If the alternative were put plainly and boldly before the people of this country—Shall the workers starve or shall they break down the fences and use the land to produce food?—does anyone doubt what their answer would be? But the question never is put in that way; it is too revolutionary. Instead we hear of road schemes and schemes for reviving foreign trade by subsidies to manufacturers and many other measures resembling pills for earthquakes. Not one political party in the country—not even the Labour Party—ever so much as suggests a land policy of such a character as we have outlined. But it is the only one which can possibly prevent the hunger which is creeping over the land and which will be felt in millions of homes in this country during the years that lie in front of us, unless clear vision and prompt action come to the rescue. We must, however, realise the vital urgency of this problem before we can deal with it properly.

Of course, the possessing classes will resist to the uttermost any attempt to curtail their pleasures and privileges. We are under no illusions in that respect. But their power for evil does not rest on themselves, but on the support which they get from their victims. The workers support the privileges of the rich, and they have done so up to the present because their masters have provided them with the means of subsistence; but now that their masters can no longer do so, the workers will surely withdraw their support. Lord Salisbury once said that "bread and circuses" was sufficient to keep the people quiet; but circuses without bread will not feed empty stomachs.

The one solid fact that stands out clear to-day is the absolute failure of our present system of production for profit. As there are no profits to be made, the capitalists calmly close their factories and leave the workers to starve. But the workers will refuse to starve, and must seek means to provide for themselves. These means are to hand, and the workers must insist on using them. Landlordism and all the antiquated relics of a feudal age must be swept away and the needs of the people be satisfied. We all seek to avoid bloodshed, but if blood is shed it will be due to the violence, not of the people, but of those who consider the retention of their privileges and possessions more vital than the welfare of the people. The situation, however, is so grave and the necessity of immediate action so urgent that those few who would stand in the way do so at their peril.

SHALL SACCO AND VANZETTI DIE?

By Eugene Lyons (Boston, Mass).

America is profoundly stirred by the conviction, on a far-fetched murder charge, of two Italians who for the last ten years have been active in the industrial movement among their countrymen in the New England section—Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti. The trial lasted almost seven weeks and drew the attention of the whole country. Boston newspapers carried detailed reports of the evidence as it was introduced from day to day. The people were consequently in a position to judge in a measure what the outcome ought to be. The result came like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky. In defiance of all justice and logic, the twelve jurors brought in the verdict that means death in the electric chair for two champions of Labour.

The case is being carried to the higher courts, and unless the verdict is reversed there the two Italians will die as criminals, for a crime which they did not commit. They will be paying the price of their loyalty to the cause, as Labour's martyrs before them have done, as Mooney and Billings almost paid it in California. They will die not because proven guilty, but because they are notoriously "Reds," Anarchists.

Saccho and Vanzetti are representative of an element prominent in the Italian-American Labour movement. They are not salary-drawing Union officials, but while working like their fellows they scatter the seed of rebellion against slave conditions. Every strike finds them co-operating in one way or another. Every mass meeting knows them as the leading spirits, preaching always the new ideas. Theirs is the hope of a world unchained, a world living on the principles of free human relationships. But while dreaming and scheming the world-to-be they are active in the contemporary struggle for better living conditions.

Through Saccho and Vanzetti the powers of plutocracy seek to strike a blow at the whole element of which they are representative. The Italian population of the United States has made the cause its own. Regardless of factions and theoretical disagreements, those who have left the shores of Italy in search of freedom and larger opportunities here have found in the Sacco-Vanzetti case a symbol of their illusions and their struggles.

England, too, ought to know about this case. Already the significance of it has crossed national boundary lines. The workers in Italy are seriously perturbed by the conviction. *Avanti* and *Umanità Nova*, which between them reach every worker in the country, are running long articles in which direct action is urged against American shipping to that country. What form that protest will eventually take cannot

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be prophesied. But as the details of the trial and its consummation are published the temper of the Italian working class rises, and finally must break forth in some decisive action.

Here is the story of Sacco and Vanzetti, in its briefest outline.

The struggle for better working conditions in the industries of New England has been incessant for years. Bravely the workers in the shoe factories and textile mills have engaged the bosses in fight after fight, some of these fights, like the Lawrence strike, developing into desperate life-and-death combats for the right to organise and a living wage. The bosses have shown no inclination to give up. They fight like titans. They use every means at their disposal, honest or otherwise, to check the growth of Unionism. They use the police and the press and the courts. One need only recall the cold-blooded attempt to kill Ettor and Giovannitti in the electric chair because they led the Lawrence strike, in order to realise the lengths to which the bosses will go.

Italians and their spokesmen have come in for the biggest share of persecution. Naturally, because they represent the biggest racial element in New England labour.

Now these two Italian Labour organisers, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, have been sentenced to die in the electric chair. Sacco was especially prominent in the Hopedale strike, and Vanzetti in the Plymouth cordage strike. When two men who have been among the most active spirits in the Labour movement for more than ten years are suddenly arrested, charged with an unbelievable crime, and condemned to die on the flimsiest circumstantial evidence, has not Labour good cause to suspect something rotten?

The powers-that-be figure that by putting the "criminal" label on those whom they want to get out of the way, they have done a good job. Shady evidence and strong doses of class and race hatred may suffice for a prejudiced jury, when Labour leaders are on trial for their life; but can organised Labour be so easily convinced? Will it let Sacco and Vanzetti go to the chair when the proofs of their innocence are so numerous, and the testimony against them so far-fetched and circumstantial?

The two men are charged with the killing of two payroll guards of the Slater and Morrill shoe factory, in South Braintree, Mass., on April 15, 1920. This crime took place in the street in broad daylight, and dozens of persons saw it. Almost a score of these, many of them in excellent positions to observe the bandits, testified that they did not see Sacco and Vanzetti among them. One came on the scene while going to give an exhibition in glass-blowing at the high school, was within ten feet of the bandits, was shot at twice, and then helped look for the guilty persons. He is positive that the defendants were not on the scene. The few who claim they could "identify" Sacco and Vanzetti were in the worst positions for observing. Practically all the State identification witnesses were discredited by reliable testimony. They contradicted themselves and in some instances confessed to having lied. The prosecution itself was forced to discount the value of some of its witnesses.

But the jury took the word of the conflicting State witnesses against the creditable testimony of eye-witnesses for the defence. In like manner they brushed aside evidence showing that the defendants were many miles from the scene at the time of the crime. Sacco was in Boston getting passports for his family; the consulate clerk remembers this, and although he is now in Italy he went before the American Consul General in Rome and swore to that effect. Eleven reliable witnesses testified to having seen Vanzetti in Plymouth, 25 miles away.

During the seven weeks of trial in Dedham, the courthouse was heavily guarded, inside and outside. The prisoners were tried in a cage and always watched by at least two officers. Spectators were searched for concealed weapons at the door. All this was designed to impress the jury with the idea that the defendants were dangerous individuals. The jury was affected by this atmosphere in the court. It was set against the accused men because of their ideas. It was encouraged in its prejudices by Judge Webster Thayer's rulings. So it convicted the men on circumstantial evidence that would not justify the killing of a dog.

The fight for the liberation of these two Italian Labour men is going ahead with fresh ardour. A motion for a new trial has been filed, and if that is denied an appeal will be brought to the higher courts. The fight cannot be carried on without cash. The prosecution had unlimited State funds at its disposal in its effort to send the men to the electric chair, but the defence must depend upon the donations of the workers and all who believe in fair play for the working class.

Sacco and Vanzetti must not die!

Contributions should be sent to the Sacco-Vanzetti Defence Committee, 32 Battery Street, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

"FREEDOM'S" 35th ANNIVERSARY.

Freedom was founded in October, 1886, so this month it celebrates its thirty-fifth anniversary. What a fitting occasion to send your old paper a birthday present? It is still desperately hard up, and would be greatly encouraged if its friends, old and new, sent a small donation along to-day. Besides, it could be eight pages every month if sufficient money came in. How much can you spare?

Reflections on the Coming International Anarchist Congress.

When after the lapse of fourteen years (Amsterdam, 1907) Anarchists of many countries will meet again in congress, the task before them is immense. As during the most brutal periods of history, but with a fiendish refinement brought to modern perfection, freedom has been curtailed and defiled alike during the years of war since 1914 and the years of peace since 1918. If one is not to despair of everything, there is hope that a universal yearning for freedom will at last spring from the intolerable blunders and misdeeds of Authority; and who but Anarchists should and would be the initiators, the propagandists, the most active supporters of these coming movements towards freedom? Such a revival is bound to come, and the present Congress could do greater good than Congresses usually do, by boldly inaugurating real intense work for freedom on the largest possible basis.

Some, many even, find compensation for the loss of freedom in the apparently enormous progress of Socialism during these years. If this were a real consolation, one might as well give up Anarchism altogether or be content to wait for it, until all dictators have voluntarily retired, the State and its myriads of functionaries gracefully agreed to disappear, and, if no other dictators care to come forward, Anarchism finally evolves. It is usual, however, for those who believe in an idea to work for it here and now; so the platonic Anarchism of the far distant future, when the last of the dictators has gone to rest, is not good enough.

From the earliest dawn of Socialism two conceptions prevailed and shaped Socialist policy, that of Socialism for Socialists and that of Socialism for a generality of men. The former is based on men harmoniously developed, practising solidarity and freedom; the latter on an indifferent, uneducated mass, guided by teachers or leaders inspired with all possible virtues. Plato's State was ruled by the wisest, the Saint Simonians' industrial society led by a semi religious hierarchy of the most capable, the Positivists' society by the most perfect scientists, and so on. On the other side some Utopian authors peopled their new worlds with men having become more perfect themselves; Fourier examined in detail how men of the most diverse dispositions might co-operate in peaceful harmony and emulation; Robert Owen tried to shape himself a generation of such men by careful education and new surroundings, and if every part of his teaching had been as well developed as that one single branch from which the world-wide Co-operative movement of our times has sprung, where should we be now?

When after ages of submission, tempered by local revolts and unceasing mental progress towards freedom, men at last began to hold up their heads politically, and when social discontent and suffering welded together the most ardent spirits of the poorer classes, the above division operated again. Socialism imposed from above, by the decrees of democratic conventions, such conventions, if necessary, purified of opponents as that of France was of the Girondists in May, 1793; its power concentrated in the hands of supreme committees, and all this, if no longer, at least formally, supported by the electors, imposed by preconcerted action of determined revolutionists, as the Babeuf conspiracy; when all this had failed, it was tried all over again by half a century of secret action to the same purpose, from Buonarroti to Blanqui and up to 1848. The open movement of 1848 knew nothing better, and the inner life of the old International was vitiated by the overbearing attitude of these authoritarians. When at last the public Socialist movement began everywhere, it was soon limited to two fields of action only: the demand for labour reforms, an obvious necessity to which only really effective Trade Unionist and Syndicalist organisations can give strength; and the struggle for political predominance, a Parliamentary Socialist majority, which then would have exercised dictatorial power. The educational, moral side of Socialism was quite neglected, and all leanings to freedom put down as breach of discipline, leading to Anarchism. No wonder that on a favourable occasion the mask of majority rule was also thrown off and naked dictatorship proclaimed; and because this succeeded in November, 1917—just as the *coups d'état* of the two Bonapartes succeeded in Brumaire and on December 2, 1851—it is now proclaimed to the world as the highest achievement of Socialist action, as the royal road to Socialism!

I will not take up space by retracing the development of thoroughgoing, complete Socialism embodying the highest demands of solidarity and of freedom; we are all more or less familiar with the aims and ideas of Godwin, Owen, and William Thompson; of Warren and Thoreau; of Proudhon, Stirner, and Bakunin; of Reclus, Kropotkin, Cafiero, and so many others; of Louise Michel and Tolstoi. Their ideas have been practically applied to international organisation and action, from Bakunin onward—to the Labour movement, by revolutionary Syndicalism, inaugurated by the anti authoritarian federations of the International; to free co-operation and home colonisation, from the old labour exchanges and Proudhon's people's bank to G. Landauer's plans; to morals, to art, to every question which modern people consider in a modern spirit. This work, usually meeting with scorn and indifference from the authoritarian Socialists, has yet reacted upon them by keeping alive a semblance of desire for freedom, even within their own ranks. Where would they be without this stimulus? If numerical superiority is with the other side, it is because their numbers are swelled by the indifferent, over whom they exercise a more or less forcible control; whilst we should not know what to do with indifferent followers, since we should not care to domineer over them as others do not scruple to do. Thus, if our numbers are small, they consist, or ought to consist, of harmoniously developed Socialists, whom we call Anarchists; whilst their large numbers consist of incongruously developed Socialists, weighed down by masses in all stages of half-Socialism or almost indifference, whom the former wish to control and who are yet a deadweight upon their more serious efforts.

Can we help them? We do this all along, for who stood up with greater energy and sacrifice for every genuine expression of Socialism than Anarchists, from the every-day labour struggle to the fiercest revolutionary struggles? When we disagree with political moves, our rule is abstention. No genuine anti-capitalist action would ever be interfered with. No neutrality could be more friendly. Resistance and open struggle would only set in if Socialists of some school pretended to be *the* Government and as such would wish and dare to impose their will upon all, Anarchists included. Then, indeed, they could not be treated by Anarchists with an iota more of patience and toleration than any other Government.

What more, then, could anybody in fairness want Anarchists to do in the presence of the various *Communist* parties? Where these parties are weak and fighting Capitalism is uphill work, they meet with our neutrality, moral support against their persecutors, and readiness for fair discussion as a matter of course. Where they are powerful, they seem to care for nobody's sympathy, and are best let alone or openly challenged. But where they get hold of the hilt of the sword, as in Russia, and use their power as upstarts and monopolists always use newly acquired power, there is nothing left but to fight them, since—up till now, at least—Anarchists have never as a body inclined themselves before those who persecute them. If some are disposed individually to defend Bolshevism under any circumstances because it is attacked continuously by International Capitalism, they may act so under an impulse as strong as that which made some Anarchists during the war stand up personally for their respective countries. The best which can be said for such acts is that they are purely individual and should not be used as an argument or example to induce others to do the same. An individual might leave us and might come back, but he would be very wrong to try to make his personal case become a rule and a model.

This covers, I believe, our attitude towards Bolshevism, and it leaves full scope to real propaganda and action such as these eventful years may demand. Which might be their principal direction?

* * * * * *

Socialism means reciprocity, regard for the equal rights of others, and the extension of this reciprocity from the narrow circles where it always existed in some form, the primitive tribe and its modern remnant, the family, to the whole of mankind, nay, to that which Elisée Reclus called "the Great Kinship" *(la Grande Famille)*, living organisms in general. This gradual extension marks the progress of civilisation, of which so-called political history is only an incident, a secondary product, not the prime mover.

In prehistoric times, when small tribes peopled immense territories, property outside the tribe was understood to be the right *utendi et abutendi*, the right to use and misuse an object, since misuse, hoarding or waste, did not count in the face of then existing plenty. By and by necessity taught the use of some restraint by agreement, and when in historic times the growing new generations found almost everything appropriated, and this state of things perpetuated by inheritance, social protest began, of which all forms of modern Socialism are an expression. There is no longer room for the *misuse* of property, since so many have to go without property at all; therefore this struggle to make the use of property accessible to all, and to abolish its misuse, is being fought to the bitter end.

I need not insist on the continuous attempts to shelve this question by half-solutions, nor on the urgency of a complete solution created by the waste and ruin from 1914 to this day. In any case, Anarchists always looked full in the face of each problem and obstacle.

If we are real Socialists, Anarchists, and Internationalists, we can no more recognise restrictions for property than for man, no more economical than political frontiers. We consider, therefore, the enclosure of valuable property, natural riches, within State frontiers, which since 1918 has been multiplied to such an enormous extent, a new appropriation of common property by a few, a new *misuse* of property, having for its purpose to give a privilege to some and to impose misery upon those excluded. In the same spirit we cannot but reject the numerous new frontiers by which men are separated, like wild animals kept in different cages, with the result that the last vestige of solidarity is almost destroyed within them and that they have now thoroughly learnt to hate each other. All changes made since 1918 have a deep anti-Socialist meaning; mediaeval political configurations have been galvanised in order to create a mediaeval mentality in general, to foster local selfishness and submission, to destroy the spirit of European brotherhood and rebellion. If this reactionary plan, the most dangerous move against Socialism and progress, is to be fought at all, this must be done thoroughly by reclaiming our common birthright to all the riches which this globe contains and to our unfettered free access to them.

The problem here involved would have come to the front without the war with which it is connected by many links. As long as selfishness and greed are rewarded by new domination and privilege its solution is farther removed than ever. But the problem will present itself again; it is this: Up to a certain time Europe, in the main, was independent of the raw materials, the natural riches abundant in the thinly settled, barely opened oversea territories, America included. This independence dwindled away, the war made an end of it, and mankind will very soon consist of two large classes, those who toil in overcrowded, exhausted Europe, forced moreover to live in dozens of separate cages, and those, much smaller in numbers, who occupy entire continents, till new soil, open new mineral wealth; in short, their fifty or hundred years of modern industrial life mockingly confront the thousands of years of European toil, stupidly broken by continuous internecine wars and their outcome. Emigration is no longer allowed to bridge this gulf even to a small degree, so the outlook becomes more ugly every year.

Socialism in the widest sense will either have to stand by and see a new powerful Capitalism built up oversea, which can afford to see this or that European country trying ineffective Bolshevist experiments, or it will grasp this new problem at the root and try to find a solution based on solidarity and freedom. To all real Socialists the globe is *one unique economic organism*, one single storehouse of natural riches and past experience, one single workroom for present and future development. It was not necessary to insist upon this as long as each of many economic areas assured complete satisfaction of the local wants; this is no longer the case, a terrible differentiation setting in and increasing. Accordingly this problem must now be faced. It can reach a solution only when Socialism is realised here and oversea, in the exhausted and the new, the poor and the rich countries; and European secular experience and other factors will be valuable assets. But a beginning must be made, and as things are Anarchists are the only Socialists who are independent enough to raise this question.

For all other Socialists, from Social Democracy to Syndicalism and Communism, are identified now with the national or local struggle for the superiority and supremacy of their countries alone. Their constituents and the organised workers as a mass demand before all "protection" of their local interests, which is felt to be best assured by a powerful State; so they are necessarily averse to genuine internationalism. If Anarchists do not speak up for Socialism in general, nobody will, and the present emasculation of Socialism will continue.

These remarks are not opposed to decentralisation, but apply to cases where decentralisation would mean the consecration of privilege. If this valley contains valuable mines and yonder valley contains barren rock, common fairness demands that the produce be lumped together, and this applies to the whole globe, which was settled at a time when the sparse and primitive population of those remote ages had no urgent industrial problems to worry them. Self-determination, again, cannot mean the selfish isolation of the privileged, letting everything go to ruin; and real self-determination would not be content with less than citizenship of the globe and good fellowship with all men.

On such a basis, then, the society of the future should be founded, and Anarchist thought would elaborate the details of a propaganda and action which would resuscitate Socialism from its present depression.

* * * * * *

There is, further, more room than ever there was before for *anti-Statist, anti-authoritarian, really Anarchist* propaganda. These ideas are still unknown to an incredible extent, since Anarchists themselves by their good hearts and helpfulness are ever so much more ready to work in the general Labour and Syndicalist movement, and to let anti Statist propaganda stand back. This is a mistake, for in this way the fruits of their activity are usually reaped by others. Since 1914 everything has been deeply tinged with authority, and many people must crave to get away from this oppression and blundering; but how? The voices of world-wide known Anarchists are nearly all silent now, and the others who remain do not seem to have made up their minds, many of them, whether to support that incarnation of authority, a Communist State, or not. In any case, there is room for an immense revival; entire generations, otherwise quite disposed for action, have never heard the voice of real freedom; so many others despair of Socialism when they see only its distorted authoritarian form. In short, I cannot help thinking that *non-dogmatical, tolerant, thoroughgoing Anarchism* will be welcome to many, if only they get the chance to hear about it. This Anarchism should be modest and critical before all, abstaining from economic affirmations, but dissecting to the root authority, the State, and the capitalist and authoritarian Socialist fallacies of our time.

It would be splendid if in these two directions—the claim of Socialism to make the riches of the whole globe really accessible and useful to *all*, and the revival of keen anti-Statist, Anarchist propaganda based on the experience gained since 1914, and at what a cost!—the forthcoming International Anarchist Congress should inspire and inaugurate renewed activity. Anarchism is worth such an effort of its own. No other line of Anarchist activity need be curtailed by it, but all would, I believe, regain new vigour in this way.

September 9, 1921.

M. N.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

United States.

Things are very bad; indeed, were any other country under consideration, one would say that they were incredible. Here, however, the extreme is always the regular order of the day, and in the tireless hunt for the Almighty Dollar everything goes. At present trade is utterly dislocated, and all hope of a revival in the steel industry—generally accepted as the business barometer—is now reported as postponed for another six months. This gives the lie to the optimistic prophecies of Messrs. Gary and Schwab, the dominant monopolists in that special line. The condition of the motor industry may be judged by the fact that the Pierce-Arrow Company, a leading concern, showed a deficit of 1,890,000 dols. in earnings for the first six months of the year.

Great financial scandals are coming to light. For example, it now appears that the Shipping Board – a Government institution—had an operating loss last year of 380,000,000 dols. instead of 99,500,000 dols., as previously stated. Out of 409,416,734 dols. disbursed for operating expenses in 1920-21, 307,034,428 dols. is unaccounted for! Chairman Lasker describes the Board's accounting system as one that was "vicious, bureaucratic, incompetent, inefficient, and put a premium on dishonesty, which has been taken advantage of." We should say so.

The result of all this—Capitalism in its most degenerate stage, still reeling from its War debauch, and insolently arrogant in its knowledge that it has all the governing machinery under its thumb—is the greatest and cruellest wave of unemployment the country has ever known. The official figures give those out of work as between 4,700,000 and 5,000,000, but such figures may always be regarded as minimising the evil, if only because many who lose their jobs do not advertise the loss.

As the unemployed are left almost entirely to shift for themselves—a fact Lloyd George and Winston Churchill have emphasised most carefully—the natural result has been an enormous increase in crimes of violence, Chicago and New York City having made a record previously unapproached. What else could be expected? On the one hand, the workers know that their masters made colossal fortunes out of them during the War and the short spurt of business that succeeded it. On the other hand, they now find themselves on the streets, facing a winter that is in many portions of the country semi-Arctic. It will be strange if there are not startling outbreaks of violence during the next six months, despite the ruthless measures of repression to which both the public authorities and private employers, through the detective agencies, habitually resort.

From all reports the tide of violence is rising fast. The mining strike in County Logan, West Virginia, was civil war on what would have been considered, only a few years ago, a quite gigantic scale. Aeroplanes and poison-gas bombs were used against the miners, and one read of 4,000 Federal troops being hurried to the scene. Labour papers give lurid accounts of the brutality with which prisoners were treated, and one witness testifies that in a single building, transformed into a mortuary, he saw at least 300 corpses.

Other patriotic bodies, supported by "leading citizens," follow suit. The New York County Committee of the American Legion refused to adopt a resolution of censure for the kidnappings and riots various of its representatives had staged, and shortly afterwards its members are found driving a well-known female Socialist speaker from town to town. However, by way of variety, they did not tar and feather her but merely pelted her with doughnuts! The Texas Legislature tabled a resolution denouncing the Ku Klux Klan, although it notoriously had established a veritable reign of terror. In Montana the American Legion has ordered the expulsion of a law professor who expressed the opinion that everyone had the right to decide for himself as to the righteousnessness or iniquity of war. At Turlock, California, fifty-eight Japanese, peacefully engaged in picking melons, were rounded up and deported. Wisely, the Japanese made no resistance, so another Tulsa tragedy was avoided. As to that frightful affair, an Oklahoma grand jury has reported that the negroes were to blame and that the cause of the trouble was their growing desire for social equality.

On May 17 Guiseppe di Filipis was taken into custody, having been identified positively as the driver of the "Red" bomb waggon that was supposed to have caused the Wall Street explosion. Eighty days later the Government officials ask that the charge be dismissed. We forget how many poor foreigners have been arrested on suspicion over that affair, which the police immediately attributed to revolutionary conspirators, though all New York realised that it was the result of a blasting operation conducted at that corner by a big powder company. However, America's treatment of the foreign element and of all who have ventured to express opinions unpopular with the moneyed class, has been unspeakable. It antedates her coming into the War, but that brought it instantly to fever heat. The reply of this so deeply injured element has yet to come, and, to our thinking, it is not likely to be long delayed. The entire situation in the United States is utterly unstable.

Italy.

Here also, while prices are rising and the value of the lira declining steadily, unemployment is increasing by leaps and bounds. Recent calculations give the number of those out of work as 700,000, but with the close of the agricultural season it was expected to exceed a million. Foodstuffs in particular are going up, and the bakeries in Rome have given the authorities notice that, if not permitted to charge more for bread, they will close down. The Food Controller is reported as having taken measures whereby the military bakers will supply the capital with bread in the event of this threat being carried out. It is to be noted that the Government has failed in its effort to induce the farmers to sell it their wheat, though a bonus which amounted to a tax of 10 per cent. on the consumer was offered. It secured less than 20 per cent. of the crop, and it is asserted that the growers, realising the scarcity of foodstuffs and believing that the Russian famine will create an extra demand, are hoarding in the expectation of starvation prices. The Fascisti campaign to bring down the cost of living has effected nothing, as was inevitable. Here, as everywhere, deep causes are at work.

Late copies of *Umanità Nova* report continuous armed conflicts between Fascisti and the more rebellious workers—Communists and Anarchists—whom they earmark for attack. But the peace patched up between them and the orthodox Socialists is working poorly, and the killing of the Socialist deputy, Di Vagno, has strained it further. What with grave differences of opinion as to the Fascisti and the split over the Third International, the Socialist movement must be a house seriously divided against itself. The situation in Italy seems to be at present very unsatisfactory, reaction being energetic and the workers too divided in opinion for any effective stand. *Le Réveil* and *Il Risveglio*, though publishing continually theoretical articles of great value, apparently find little to chronicle in the field of action, either here or in Switzerland. As regards the last-named country, a conference between three federations, representing 3,000 workers, seems to have been captured by the Socialists, and the manifesto it put out makes pitiful reading, being simply a statement that the assembly "hopes to be able to rely on the fullest support from the authorities, communal, cantonal, and federal," in their efforts to tide over the present crisis. The Anarchists, who worked hard to bring about this conference, as a stepping-stone to something like united and effective action, found themselves left out in the cold. There has been a split between the New Communists and the Socialists, and the latter are reported as trying to form a Syndicalist Union which shall run the Workers' Union out of the field. Taken as a whole, a pretty hopeless story, and it looks as if things will have to get even worse before they can begin to mend.

The International Modern School.

On Sunday, September 4, the teachers and pupils of the School spent a day at Kew Gardens. The weather being very favourable, the flower beds were seen at their best. The children were taken into one of the many hothouses, where tropical plants and lotus flowers were seen in great variety of beauty and colour. They were also taken into the museum, where they displayed great interest in the wonderful size and circumference to which trees grew in more favourable climates than our own, and the different kinds of timber imported from abroad. Within the grounds themselves many trees were pointed out to them which had either been transplanted from abroad or had originated from a tree so transplanted. The most popular of the foreign trees was that variety of cedar from Northern Africa and India known as the deodar. Altogether a most enjoyable and instructive day was spent.

It is the intention of the School Group to give the children occasional outings where they can learn something whilst they are enjoying themselves. Needless to say, this splendid method of educating children requires funds—a matter in which the School is rather handicapped.

It is rather regrettable that parents do not pay as much attention to their children's mental development as they do to their physical growth. Many parents complain that their children, once very brilliant and sharp, have grown up dull and slow-witted. That is due to the present system of education, which lays down hard and fast rules for children of all types, thus destroying their originality. The teachers and the Group, realising this, have one goal in view—the maintaining of the individuality of each child, and to this end are following the rational methods as laid down by Francisco Ferrer. The least the parents can do in appreciation of this is to take a greater interest in the moral progress of their children, and to help financially as far as possible so that the good work undertaken by the School may continue. Donations to the School should be paid only to E. Michaels, secretary.

A. G.

Objections to Anarchism.

By GEORGE BARRETT.

32 pages. Price 4d; post-free, 5d.; 13 copies, 3s.; postage extra.

Orders to Freedom Press, 127 Ossulston Street, London, N.W.1.

ANARCHIST PRISONERS IN RUSSIA.

(*To the Editor of* FREEDOM.)

DEAR SIR,—Having read FREEDOM for some time, I have been much impressed by the articles and letters appearing therein regarding the Communist oligarchy in Russia and their treatment of Anarchist prisoners. Recently I attended a meeting of the Red Trade Union International, held under the auspices of the local branch of the Communist Party, in the Co-operative Hall, Plymouth. The principal speaker was Mr. Harry Pollitt, lately returned from Moscow. I do not disagree with the lecture itself, because I recognise the awful condition Russia must be in after the terrible period she has been through. At the close of the lecture I asked Mr. Pollitt whether it was true that Anarchists, many of whom had given their life-service to the revolutionary movement in Russia, and had helped in no uncertain degree to bring about the downfall of Tsarism, were at present languishing behind prison walls in Russia, and in addition being cruelly and shamefully maltreated.

On rising to reply, Mr. Pollitt said this was a *very, very* serious question indeed, but he would do his best to answer it. He said that at the last Congress of the R.T.U.I. in Moscow several of the foreign delegates wanted to know the reason why the Anarchists were in prison. They were told by the Communist representatives that it was because they were helping the counter-revolutionaries to restore the Tsarist régime, and in addition had thrown a bomb into a conference of Soviet delegates. As proof of this, Mr. Pollitt was shown a letter purporting to come direct from the Anarchists, glorying in the fact of aiding the counter-revolutionaries, and also claiming credit for throwing this particular bomb. He also said that Tom Mann, himself, and others were absolutely satisfied as to the guilt of the Anarchists. Dear Mr. Editor, is the name of *agent provocateur* banished from the world? A more dastardly accusation I never heard in my life. Mr. Pollitt stated that he himself, Tom Mann, and others were elected as a visiting committee to the Anarchists, with full power to grant a free pardon to all those who promised to refrain from helping the counter-revolutionaries in future. He said some promised and were granted their freedom; others refused to do so and gloried in the fact that they had helped the counter-revolutionaries and had also been party to the bomb-throwing, and they were at present in prison.

Now I hold no brief for this kind of action if it has been done, as I know something of the history of Russia, and have also been in Northern and Southern Russia. Any man or party of men who try to bring back the Tsarist régime, with all its horrors, deserve all they get; but I cannot believe that men and women who have suffered the tortures of the damned under the heel of the Tsar, and who helped to bring about the downfall of Tsarism, would aid the counter-revolutionaries to bring about its return. I want more evidence than the letter which Mr. Pollitt and Tom Mann saw in Moscow. The silence of all the Communist papers on the treatment of the Anarchists seems strange to me, and now we find this charge brought up when the Communists are being attacked at all their meetings.

I hope, Sir, you will find room in FREEDOM for this all-absorbing topic, and to deal with the statement of Mr. Pollitt.—Yours fraternally,

Plymouth. H. E. BRAUND, Dockers' Union.

[The statement of the Bolsheviks that the Anarchists in Russia are or have been helping the counter-revolutionaries to restore the Tsarist régime is a calculated and deliberate lie, and we say this in spite of the testimony of Mr. Pollitt and Tom Mann. Many of our comrades returned to Russia from all parts of the world to help the Revolution, but when the Bolsheviks took all power into their own hands and persecuted everybody who did not agree with the methods of the Dictatorship, our comrades naturally worked to regain their freedom and save the Revolution, and were immediately denounced as counter-revolutionaries. Makhno and the "Free Fighters" of the Ukraine, who fought against the centralising tendencies of the Bolsheviks, were also called counter-revolutionaries, in spite of the fact that they had fought Denikin and his White Guards. Anarchists who tried to organise syndicates of workmen and peasants were arrested and thrown into prison on the same charge. The Anarchists in prison who were interviewed by Messrs. Pollitt and Mann refused to give an undertaking to cease attacking the Dictatorship, but that is a very different thing to helping to restore the Tsarist régime. We know that a bomb was thrown into a meeting of the Moscow Soviet, but by whom we do not know. Probably it was thrown by someone in retaliation for the oppressive persecution of the Bolsheviks. Violence begets violence, and the Bolsheviks must not complain if somebody hits back occasionally. "The Anarchist is a savage creature—he defends himself when he is attacked." Our comrades in Russia are fighting for the freedom which they hoped the Revolution would bring to that country, and the Bolsheviks and their paid agents throughout the world are lying to their fullest capacity to misrepresent them.—ED. FREEDOM.]

FREE SOCIETY.

Issued Monthly by the Anarchist Communist Groups of the United States and Canada.

No Subscription. Voluntary Contributions. Order through FREEDOM.

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